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The Use of Maps in Missionary Meetings

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The Use of Maps in Missionary Meetings.

ARE there not innumerable difficulties to be bridged in life, the bridging of which is worthy of our profoundest study? How many Alps of obstruction are in the way of the onward movement of Christianized civilization. The Christian Engineers must study to show themselves workmen approved of God, workmen who need not be ashamed before their fellow craftsmen. America changes so fast that every few years a new output of books is needed to set forth the new face things have put on, the new problems that have appeared, the new ideas that have germinated among her people. the unexpected development of evil as well as of good resulting from established institutions. Interesting information vividly illustrated, with inspiring music interspersed, will result in a development of mighty missionary sentiment. Kindle a fire of this character each month, vary the

material used for fuel, put as much energy into planning for a missionary meeting as for a social, find parts suited to each, and you will succeed. The musical member can add her voice, the artistic can illustrate by map or picture, and thus impress the truth, facts, and places more deeply on the mind. A Scotch gentleman well versed in matters pertaining to his own country asked an American missionary, while crossing the Atlantic, "if we went to California in the Mississippi steamers." Can it be that we base our judgment of others on as imperfect knowledge as they display of us? Shortly after Rev. Mr. McClintock and wife went to Hainan, a cousin of Mr. McClintock's. Miss Mary Snodgrass, went to Fungchow, China, as a missionary teacher. A query arose among her friends whether they would probably meet and greet each other there. To satisfy ourselves, we looked up the location of each, and found that they were as far removed from each other as if one were in New York and the other in San Francisco, and the means of travel limited and difficult. A company of tourists crossing the continent were surprised at the knowledge displayed by one of their number concerning the people, their customs, manner of life, and beliefs, especially of Utah and its peculiar people, the Mormons. When asked if she had made the trip before, she replied, "This is my first trip." "Then how do you know so much of the country and its people?" She said, "From my Home Mission Monthly and our missionary

map studies." The student who earnestly studies the mission fields, either home or foreign, must become familiar with a wide scope of country and a varied class of people. A short time ago our whole country was aflame with interest in the war with Spain. The daily papers were filled with maps of Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippine Islands. These were necessary to an intelligent interest and understanding of where the war was to be waged, the difficulties to be encountered, the points of attack, the movement of the fleets, etc. And they were studied, too. In one family with which I was familiar the oldest son was a volunteer in the part of the army commanded by Gen. Lee. They were sent to Jacksonville to camp, with the expectation of moving on into Cuba very soon. In the home from which that volunteer went were four younger brothers and sisters. A map of Cuba and the adjacent islands was procured and tacked on the wall, and studied by each member of that family. Each post was located, the manner of entrance was studied, the distance, the peculiarities of climate, roads, etc., were talked over. If that elder brother went there, each member of the home circle wanted to know what conditions would confront him. The more intimate knowledge we have of the work, the workers, their location and surroundings, their manner of life, the people with whom they have to work, the climate and products, what they have to eat and wear, the more interest we have in them, and

the more definite will be our gifts and prayers. At a recent company in Washington, D. C., where prominent women were invited to meet one of our well-known missionary teachers, beside each plate was a dainty card bearing a small American flag and a pen-and-ink sketch map of the mission field locating the school of the guest in whose honor the luncheon had been given. A worker in Nebraska tells her plan of interesting the uninterested. She emphasizes three M's: maps, magazines and music. She places maps first. "A good large map, drawn in colored crayon on muslin, is a great help to a program. I don't see how it can be carried on without one." The only gifts to be depended on are those prompted by knowledge that keeps itself informed continually of the exact state of the object to be benefitted by the gift. Have you taken up the life of the exceptional people, their homes, occupations, and the effects of their beliefs? Do you hunt up the places referred to on the map? Look up the meaning of words. It is often difficult, but the harder the hunt the more worth while. "Flowery beds of ease" are not for workers. Rule Number One for missionary workers is, Have a map of the country always in view wherever you meet; don't feel that your duty is done when you listen only.

"There's a work for me and a work for you;
Something for each of us now to do."

HOW TO MAKE MAPS.

Many societies feel that they do not have the money to spend for maps, or that the money would do more good to go directly to the field, yet they desire the maps. To such some suggestions about map making may be of benefit. Make a stretcher of four strips of wood, fastened at the corners, to make the map the size you desire. Procure white muslin the desired width and tack to the stretcher. Then with paints, white lead, lampblack, and as many dry colors as you wish to use, varnish and turpentine, you are ready for work. An outline map can soon be made. Mark all the mission stations, prominent physical features and places of importance, as you have learned them from the latest reading matter obtainable, both secular and religious. Full directions for making these maps can be found in the "Home Mission Monthly" of May, 1896. If this is too expensive, a large sheet of cardboard or heavy paper can be used, tacked to a smooth wall or table, colored crayon used, and the same effect obtained, although the maps would not be so convenient or durable. A good plan is to appoint a committee of young people. Frequently one or more can be found with a special aptitude for such work, and would take an interest in it and be profited by it. If these maps are hung about the room where the meeting is held, they are a constant source of interest.

HOW TO USE MAPS.

One method of using the maps is to have one member prepare a map talk, to make herself familiar with the mission field, its population, physical features, manners and customs, its mission stations, workers, kind and amount of work done, etc., anything and everything that will add interest. As she talks she points out the things of importance, locates the stations, names some of the workers at each station, tells whether the work is preaching, teaching, or medical work, whether local or itinerating. Or she may take you on a trip to Presbytery, with some of the missionaries, many of them travelling hundreds of miles. This requires a great deal of study on the part of one person, and may be of great benefit to the society as a whole, as one object is to induce as many as possible to study the field. Another method is to appoint a leader who will prepare a list of questions about the field, the mission workers, the encouragements, the greatest needs, etc., the questions to be distributed previous to the meeting, so that all may have an opportunity of looking up this information. Then, at the meeting, the leader asks these questions and the different members answer, pointing out on the maps each place talked about.

We cannot become interested in mission work by picking up an item now and then about it. We must become as familiar with the stations and the workers as we are with the nearby towns

and cities and our near neighbors. One society reports that it has found that the large map usually hung up on the wall at the time of the study of the mission fields is not sufficient. They therefore draw a small map, and by a manifolding machine prepare as many copies as there are members of the society. These, either on paper or muslin, are distributed, with pencils, at the meeting. A leader, drawing on the blackboard, thus conducts the party on a railroad journey: the line of the road is drawn, the mission stations at which they stop are marked, and at least one missionary at each station is visited. Each member fills out her own map, which she has to carry home with her for future reference, and each will soon be the possessor of a set of valuable maps;—valuable because they mean definite information.

To become conversant with missionary work is to be conversant with progress in every direction. One needs to know a great deal more than one tells, to be able to give the right bit of information in the right place. An exhaustive study of the subject is demanded, not a kaleidoscopic jumble of facts about Alaska, New Mexico, the Freedmen, etc. Personal surrender, personal interest, personal work, is necessary. It is easy to give money; the hardest thing is to give self.

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